

From the Office of the Police Chief

**CHIEF JAMES SMITH
LAWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

29 April 2021

On November 19, 2020 Lawton Police Officers responded to a 911 call at Pepper Tree Apartments in reference to an adult male kicking in an apartment door. When officers arrived, they observed an unclothed female screaming and running from the apartment building. Shortly afterward, an adult male -- later identified as Duane Murray -- exited the apartment building holding a weapon to his head. Officers gave numerous commands to Mr. Murray to drop his weapon and place it on the ground. Mr. Murray refused these commands and continued to walk around the parking lot, confessing to raping the woman he loved and stating that he wanted officers to shoot him.

Officers continued to communicate with Mr. Murray for an extended time period in an attempt to have him drop his weapon and to comply, which he refused to do. An LPD Crisis Negotiator then arrived and continued to negotiate with Mr. Murray. Refusing commands, Murray began walking towards officers, pointing and stating "You, you, you.....blast me to death." Murray continued to refuse officers' commands to drop his weapon while walking towards the officers. An officer fired less than lethal bean bag rounds to attempt to get Murray to comply and Murray then pointed his weapon toward the officers. When he did so, Officer Brandon Becker fired his weapon striking Mr. Murray once, which resulted in his loss of life.

The goal of the Lawton Police Department is to ensure that critical incidents of this nature are thoroughly investigated. That is why any time there is an officer involved shooting, I request the assistance of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation to conduct an independent, impartial, and comprehensive review of the incident.

The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation has completed its' investigation of this incident and submitted their findings to the Comanche County District Attorney's office. The Comanche County District Attorney's Office has thoroughly reviewed the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation's report and has cleared the involved Officer of any wrongdoing.

With the completion of OSBI's investigation and the findings of the Comanche County District Attorney, the body worn camera footage has been released to the media and requesting parties.

The Lawton Police Department's continued goal is to consistently strive to strengthen the bond between the Department and the Citizens in this community. I would like to express my sincere condolences for all involved and continue to lift the family in prayer as we all navigate through this time of healing.

-James Smith, Lawton Police Chief